Lucy & Papa

Chapter 4 - Lucy's First Day at School Part 1

Part 1

Some time passed.

parents themselves.

Eris and Roxy safely gave birth to their children. Both of them were girls. Roxy's daughter was named Lily and Eris's daughter was named Christina. With this, we now had 4 daughters and 2 sons. Our house had become a little cramped. It was about time we gave some thought to remodelling while taking family planning into consideration.

Furthermore, Lucy was now 7 years old.

Now that she was 7, she could be called a first-year student studying in a primary school. The primary school was a place where kids of the same age learned about the fundamental knowledge that was essential for survival while co-habitating with other students.

Of course, it would be beneficial if that knowledge was taught by the

The most important keyword in a school was communal life. Humans are beings who lived in groups. Most humans can't live alone. They are beings who live together while helping each other, loving each other and getting into fights from time to time. It's possible that those with the will to stay alone are out there, but they are probably a minority. A school is a place where one learns how to make colleagues or friends, how to interact with them and how fights occur.

Nevertheless, a primary-school-like system didn't exist in this Ranoa Kingdom. It should be obvious because there was no compulsory education. Here, a school was considered to be a place where people go if they wanted to go.

Even so, I thought that there was a need to go to school. Part of the reason was that I dropped out of high school in my previous life, but as for this life, I did learn a lot of things in the school of this world too. I got along with Zanoba, met with Cliff, Badigadi, Nanahoshi, Ariel... And then married Sylphy.

There was no doubt that it was because of my daily attendance to Ranoa Magic University that my human relations were now in such abundance.

As such, I thought that there was a need to go to school, to let them go.

As such, during last year's family council, that proposal was approved by more than half the members. Sylphy, Roxy and Lilya were in agreement. Even though Eris said "There's not really any need to go", she didn't strongly oppose it.

Thus, it was decided that our children would start attending the University when they became 7. Though the other students enrolling wouldn't necessarily be in the same age group, it was decided with the thought that it would be beneficial to their future.

And today was Lucy's first day attending school. From here on out, for 7 years, or possibly even more if she repeated a year or two, this was the very first day of her school which she would be attending for a very long time.

"Is there anything that you've forgotten, Lucy?"
"Nope!"

Lucy, wearing her oversized uniform and carrying a bag too big for her, was now standing in front of the entranceway. Everything that she had on was brand new. The beginner's staff and the robe contained within the bag, magic textbooks, even the lunch box, everything was new. And it seemed that Lucy, with all her new things, was happily grinning while looking at herself in the mirror.

As a result of that, she was somewhat careless, even to my words. Well, she did check those out many times over yesterday night, and there weren't that many belongings to begin with. So I guess it should be fine. But, that, isn't she forgetting that? Then shouldn't it be fine to remind her?

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"Do you have your handkerchief?"
"It's in my pocket!"
"Pencil case?"
"It's in my bag!"
"Lunch box?"
"It's in my bag!"
"My goodbye kiss?"
"That's a no!"
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That's a no!? Impossible, that can't be...

Nevermind.

Um... was there something else? Something which was easily forgotten. Like future dreams, aspirations, the truth...

"Rudy, it's gonna be fine."

As I pondered, Sylphy came and patted on my back.

"Lucy is already a grown up, so it's fine."

Grown up.

She had certainly grown up. She was already 7 years old. Now that she was 7 she could do various things and do it alone.

"Papa, it's gonna be fine! I'm gonna work hard!"

Lucy said while clenching her fist. That gesture was brave, lovely and very worrying. If I was a kidnapper and looked at something like this, I

would immediately steal her away.

Although she had grown up, she still had some way to go.

"Lucy, don't follow any strangers no matter what they say, okay?" "Okay!"

"If they forcefully try to take you away then shout out my name as loud as you can, okay?"

"Okay!"

"If they covered up your mouth and said that they'll kill you if you make a noise then ask them to read the letter I've prepared, okay?" "Okaaay!"

Incidentally, I've written quite a bit for the kidnapper. I've written just whose subordinate I am and what kind of people I have connections with. I've also written just what would happen if Lucy were to be hurt. It's possible that they might not be literate, but I've made necessary arrangements with the slave traders and asked them to socially lynch those who seem like they would kidnap my children. Those who would kidnap my children would be ostracised.

Still, cause for concern was something that was common. Unpredictable situations could exist in any amount. I couldn't help but get worried sick that Lucy might get dragged into something like that.

"Lucy, if your friends at school bully you then tell it to your teacher." "Okay."

"I don't think it'll happen, but if even the teacher bullies you, then tell it to Blue-Mama or Vice principal. Both of them stay in the staff room." "Okay."

"If you think that you can't tell to Blue-Mama or Vice principal then there's White-Mama or Red-Mama or Auntie Aisha or Granny Lilya or Granny Elinalize... anyway, just consult someone. Of course, Papa is fine as well and Papa's friends too. Don't try to do things alone, okay?" "Okaaaay."

"If you are being bullied by some other kid then..."

I was suddenly grabbed at the nape of my neck and was pulled backwards. When I examined the situation, I saw Sylphy with an anger on her face. Lucy seemed to have became a little downhearted as well.

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"Papa, I'll be fine, okay...?"
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Lucy said with a little uneasiness in her voice, her eyes upturned. I wonder if I ended up making her nervous. I should've told her more about a dream-like school life. For example, to try her best to make 100 friends in school.

But it's a serious matter. Though at times it would seem like there would be no one to help you from bullying, your ally would be lying in wait, somewhere around you.

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"Rudy, try to believe in Lucy a little bit more."
".....Okay."
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But yeah, that's right.

We're sending the kid to school to raise her level of independence. I shouldn't be thinking about dealing with every single little thing. In time, even Lucy would grow up and then leave our house to become fully independent. Of course, I'm talking about way into the future, but we were sending her to school so that she could do that properly in the first place.

That's right, this matter was decided by the whole family.

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"Lucy, say that you're off."
"I'm off!"
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Lucy said that and opened the door, she left the house cheerfully. Seeing that, I said "Take care" while carefully watching over her.

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"..."
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The ones who saw her off were me and Sylphy, Eris with Leo, Zenith and Lilya. Roxy had already left for school. It seemed that some trouble

came up at the Mercenary group, and as such, Aisha left just as early. The rest of the kids were still sleeping as they were still small.

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"I'm going for my sword practise."

"Well then, allow me to do the laundry."

"Then, I'll do the cleaning."
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While everyone left in small groups, I just kept staring at the door. The same as Leo. I'm sure our hearts are on the same wavelength.

I'm worried.

Perhaps Lucy had already gotten lost on her way. Though she walked the road to school along with Sylphy and Roxy quite often. But she's alone today. I was worried.

As I thought, perhaps I shouldn't let a 7 year old child walk alone. Such a cute little child should not be allowed to walk the roads alone. I should make a muscular bodyguard follow her. For example, someone with green hair, holding a white spear, who loves children.

After that, comes teaching.

Lucy had been given special lessons by Eris, Roxy and Sylphy. It's not that she won't be able to keep up, but that we might have taught her so much that it would cause her to feel out of place.

It's not like she's a raw diamond either. Though Vice Principal Jinas did say something like that, we still enrolled her as a normal student keeping in mind that a normal experience would be best for her. She even sat a proper examination.

I did not know whether that would result into a good direction or a bad direction. I also had fears that she might be used as a guinea pig.

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"Leo."
"Woof."
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Leo replied to me with but a single word, and raised his head to stop me in my tracks. As expected of our guardian deity. We both were dancing to the same rhythm. We didn't even need to exchange any words between us.

"Rudy! Don't you dare!"

As I put my hand on the door, I heard Sylphy's sharp voice coming from the back. On looking back, I saw an irritated Sylphy standing there with her hands on her waist.

"Didn't you promise just yesterday that you wouldn't do anything and just watch over!?"

"No, you're misunderstanding. Leo wants to go for walk."

As I said that, Leo turned on his tail, walked towards the hallway, and escaped to the children's room.

This was treachery. He would protect the kids from outer enemies but wouldn't protect me from my wife.

"Listen, Rudy."

As I was petrified on the spot, Sylphy gave out a sigh without removing her hands from her waist.

"I've told you before, but I think that I was able to grow up because I was separated from you, Rudy. You taught me magic, you taught me how to study, and making that as my basis, I learned a lot. Even after you were gone, even when I went to Ariel-sama after the Teleport Incident."

"Yeah."

"It's true, teaching someone all kinds of things and protecting them is good. But only having things given to you by someone else is not. People have to find themselves and know what they can and can't do. If someone is always supporting you, when the time comes to walk on your own, you won't be able to."

I was looking forward to this day. As Lucy's guardian, I would go to school together with her, ask the teacher to take care of my kid, and intended to show her around the school. For that reason alone, I took a holiday today. I requested Orsted to give me a day off.

But, Sylphy insisted yesterday just like right now. That I mustn't be allowed to go along with her. That Lucy should be sent to school alone. She insisted upon that.

"That's why, okay? Just quietly keep on the look out for now? Even if she made a mistake it'll only be for Lucy's own sake." ".....Okay."

I consented as well.

Sylphy had been raising Lucy for 7 years. She of all people sent Lucy out with such confidence, that's why I must respect that too. It's bad if I just keep on dealing with things for her.

Well, it's so worrying because I understand that. Lucy was a reliable kid. She was good at taking care of her little brothers and sisters, she was obedient, and I had heard that the neighboring kids yearned for her as well. In fact, she might just get used to school life even faster than someone like me.

Then there was only one thing that I could do. I prayed so that Lucy had a fun time in school. My God resided in that school so my prayer should definitely get through.

"...Then, I'll be going to meet Orsted-sama."

"Yeah. Got it. If there's something you need then tell me."

...But I still feel lonely. While thinking that I headed towards Orsted's office.

All of that happened about 1 hour ago.

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"And now I'm here."
"..."
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"I mean, I know that Sylphy is right. Even I— even Sylphy was able to grow because we left our house. That's unmistakably right."

I was expressing my idle complaints. I had consented. If that's what Sylphy had decided then I had to abide by that too. Luckily, there were many acquaintances in the Magic University and danger was low as well. I had also heard that student order had improved quite a bit because of Norn's Presidency. The mercenary group led by Aisha had become quite big due to which the whole town's order had improved as well.

Yet, I was still worried. I had this indescribable fuzzy feeling.

"But... you know.

Lucy is still 7 years old. She's so small yet has to go to school alone... that's just...

Well, I mean it's true that I went to Eris's place when I was 7 and started exploring around my village from age 5 but... But I could at least see her off, right?

Orsted-sama, what do you think?"

Orsted had a grim face. A face which questioned whether this matter was related to work or not.

I might've mistaken him as someone to consult with. When given considerable thought I realised that he was still my boss. Not a person who should be listening to my idle complaints.

If the idle talk was related to Hitogami then it might be fine but I guess lodging complaints about my family matters was not a good idea. Even Orsted might not know how to answer if he was suddenly asked

about something like this. And Lucy was someone who was not within Orsted's field of knowledge...

I just thought that Orsted might understand somehow. This unbearable feeling of mine!

"..."

As I was lost in thought, Orsted stood up. He could also be seen perking up his shoulders.

Of course, I'd expect this as I've associated myself with Orsted for a long time. I knew that he wouldn't get angry at something like this.

He was not angry at all. It took a considerable amount of effort to anger him.

"You are foolish."

Huh? He got angry?

He's not angry, right? He looks angry. That's weird. I'm being scolded.

"...Use this."

The thing Orsted handed over to me was the black helmet. The spare curse reduction helmet.

"…"

What am I supposed to with this?

"You're not worried about your daughter, you just want to go and see her, don't you?"
"!"

I see, that's right!

I just want to go and see her. It's not that I'm worried about Lucy or not or anything. No, obviously, that's one reason as well, but I just want to

see her introducing herself in the classroom, quickly raising her hand trying to answer a question, tip-toeing in the library to get a book, and things like that.

There was no parent's day in Magic University. I wanted to go and see Norn as well but couldn't. I wanted to watch Lucy at least. That wish of mine was very big!

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"B-but, if I go and see her then Sylphy would get angry."
"..."
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When I said that, Orsted silently took off his coat. And then, put it on my shoulder. As if to say "Use this too". Just what am I supposed to do with the helmet and this coat?

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"Umm... this is?"
"It's fine as long as you don't go."
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Orsted-sama, I do not know what you are trying to say. Please explain it in a way that the foolish me can understand. Even though I want to go, I shouldn't? Please spare me that quick wit of yours.

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".....Hm?"
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No wait, does that mean...

Rudeus himself mustn't cross that bridge which means that it's fine if he doesn't.

One's clothing determines one's position. So if the clothing changes so does the position. And if the position changes then the person changes too.

I had the position of Orsted's right hand man while I wore the grey robe. But what would happen when I wore the white coat and black helmet?

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"…"
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I put on the helmet and wore the coat. The helmet was heavy and the

coat was bulky but warm. If I wore it for a long duration of time, my shoulders would probably get stiff. But that was only a trivial matter. I stood in front of the mirror.

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"This is... me..."1
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The one being reflected in the mirror was undoubtedly... The Dragon God Orsted! That's right, if I wore the black helmet and white coat then even I could become Dragon God Orsted! If I were to go and was scolded then it's fine if Orsted goes!

Everything turned out better than expected!

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"…"
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...No, it's different no matter how you look at it.

I did not look like Orsted at all. My height was different and so was my breadth. My entire ambience was completely wrong to begin with. There's wasn't any strange and powerful atmosphere like the one that comes from Orsted. The being reflected in the mirror looked like a impersonator no matter how you looked at it. To the trained eye, this appearance would be found out as a sham at just one look.

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"Umm... won't they find out like this?"

"They wouldn't be able to know that it's you."
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Well that's true. Yeah, that's just how it was. It didn't have to be Orsted, it didn't even have to be me. Which meant that I should just put on the helmet and be done with it. As expected of Orsted, he's an amazingly bright gentleman.

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"Orsted-sama."

"..."

"Thank you very much."

"Hmm."
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Orsted reseated himself in the chair with a tired expression. There's

probably some documents that need filling out. I might've interrupted him during his work. Since I wasn't supposed to be here today.

"Well then, I'm off."

I went out of the conference room with an appearance similar to Orsted's. As I couldn't bear it any longer, I hurried to Magic University.

Part 3

I left the office in Dragon God style.

It was a mighty fine weather outside. Fine weather appropriate for Lucy's first day at school. And I somehow felt stronger, probably because I was wearing these clothes.

Is this how a person feels who swaggers about under borrowed authority? I feel like I could make even the North God dance around my pinky.

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"Orsted-sama, are you about to leave?"
"...!"
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As I was thinking that, I was suddenly called out from the back of the office. When I looked around, I could see a young boy holding a large sword.

Aleksander Ryback. It was North God Kalman the Third. Don't tell me, did he hear my thoughts? Nah, that's not it. I feel like he's cleaned himself up a bit, but it's kind of like, only at the level of feeling stronger after watching Rocky. That so-called 'movie motivation.'

"Where might you be heading today, Orsted-sama? Shall I accompany you?"

"...?"

For a moment I thought he was mocking me. However, Alek's eyes were clear in all respects and his tone was sincere.

"Ah, thank you very much for the other day. To think that the North God Style four foot form would have such an advantage...
I never thought that you would be so knowledgeable about the North God style. It's clear to me just how inexperienced I currently am. Now that I recall myself during the Battle of Biheiril, I might die from embarrassment."

Don't tell me he hasn't yet realised that I'm not Orsted? No, that can't be. Alek had been at Orsted's side constantly these days. He even lived in one of the basement rooms of the office. He had taken the role like that of a watchdog of Orsted. It would be troublesome if the watchdog mistook his master for someone else.

"Have you not realised yet?"
"What have I not realised!?"

No, when it came to the North God style, he might be deceiving me. It's the Death God's bewitching sword, the technique to make your opponent bewildered.

"Please say honestly, you already know, right?"

When I said that, Alek wore a puzzled face immediately after which it became a serious one, and then he put his hand on his chin. Furthermore, he tilted his head sideways and furrowed his brows. It was as if a question mark was floating around his head. This was truly a face of a person who hadn't yet realised it. It would be quite a feat if this was an acting.

"Please forgive my insolence. It seems I'm a bit dull as such I cannot understand."

"...Really? Can't you feel that something might be out of place?"

"Might it be the trivialities? Please forgive me but I'm someone who doesn't pay much attention to minor details as such I might not be able to evade any traps or such and I'm aware that is not a good thing, but I've been like this since birth so..."

He began giving an explanation. Did he really not realise? My height was different, even my physique, and I wasn't really trying to imitate Orsted's voice or anything, my tone was different from his to begin with. Even though the curse had been reduced, you could still feel discomfort to some degree...

Is this a joke? Eh? Really?

"The correct answer lies in the conference room of the office."
"I see, got it!"

Alek said that and entered the office with a triumphant look. I thought of him as a sharp guy during the Battle of Biheiril but I wonder how he really was. It could be that his mind works differently during peaceful times. Yeah that's right, even my concentration changes during battle. That may be it.

But I've gotten a little worried that someone like him is left alongside Orsted...

Part 4

When Aleksander entered the office, his eyes met with the receptionist named Faria Steer. While looking at Aleksander and pondering whether she should ask or not, she finally opened her lips after a moment of hesitation.

[&]quot;Excuse me, Aleksander-sama."

[&]quot;What is it, Faria-san? I'll be going to find out this *correct* answer that lies in the conference room so please make it short."

[&]quot;Rudeus-sama had just now left the premises wearing Orsted-sama's clothing but... does he intend to do something?"

Upon hearing that, Aleksander made a very surprised face.

"Eh... Rudeus-sama wearing Orsted-sama's clothes...!?"

Aleksander couldn't even think about doing something like that. Imitating Orsted's clothing style was something which was absolutely dreadful to him.

And at the same time, he gulped down his own saliva. The reason why Rudeus was wearing Orsted's clothes didn't even require him to think that much. He thought that something needed to be done which could only work with Orsted's clothes.

Possibly a decoy or something. He thought that Rudeus intended to lure the enemy out while in disguise as Orsted and arrest the enemy. In the meantime, Orsted would be able to achieve an objective.

Which meant that the enemy was so strong that one couldn't fight the said enemy without Orsted. For example, one of the overlooked World Powers, Technique God or someone who Aleksander had unpleasant memories with, Death God Randolf. Or one of the Demon Slaying Three Heroes, Armored Dragon King Perugius Dola or possibly North God Kalman the Second, Alek's father, Alex.

Either way, Rudeus had enough potential alone. It was possible that victory could be assured if he were to equip the Magic Armor but then he wouldn't be able to accomplish his job as a decoy.

Even Aleksander knew about Rudeus' bravery. The fearless Rudeus. Aleksander knew that Rudeus' combat power was inferior to his. However, those movements he saw in Biheiril Kingdom still remained in his memory vividly. That power to face an enemy far stronger than yourself with simple honesty. That was something Aleksander knew well.

It was courage. Rudeus was a hero who had been acknowledged by

Atoferatofe herself.

And then, he realised, that this was the *correct* answer.

"Faria-san, please keep that matter confidential." "Y-yes..."

Faria Steer's neck inclination was gradually coming up to its regular position but Alek paid it no heed and put his hand on the door to the conference room.

He prayed that he would be granted the honor by Orsted to fight alongside that hero someday. While burying those feelings deep within his heart he entered the room.

Though it was only a few minutes after that Alek would ask about the correct answer from Orsted himself.

Next time, a shocking development where a man with a full-faced helmet is seen chasing after 7-year-old girls!

Chapter 5 – Lucy's First Day at School Part 2

Part 1

I chose a route and started walking, a route with the least people possible. And yet, I felt like I was attracting attention. It was probably because I was currently in disguise.

Something called one's imagination.

But even so, others did not have much interest. No, I still felt the surroundings gazes.

But that should be obvious. Orsted had been using the office on the outskirts of town for a while now. There weren't many people who had seen him in person, but there were plenty who knew of this appearance of his. A black helmet and a white cloak.

Right now, my outfit was the same as that of Orsted's trademark. Walking through the town like this, it was natural I attracted attention.

In fact, without the curse, I might be giving a favourable impression to the townsfolk. Maybe I should try the main street. Doing good things to give someone a better image, like in the old days.

The main street was closer to the school too.

"Yep, that's good."

Killing two birds with one stone.

Improving Orsted's reputation would be a plus for me as well. Right, next time I should propose a 『Dragon God Festival』 where everybody dresses up in black helmets and white cloaks and dances in ecstasy.

With that in mind, I started moving towards the main street.

"Wha!?"

And, in that instant, I quickly turned around and hid myself.

I had glimpsed a familiar red haired person in the main street. And with that red haired person was the figure of a large white dog. And on the dog's back were two children.

They were Eris and Leo. And on Leo's back, Lara and Ars.

Leo, you two-timer! Even though you ran away from a walk with me, you went out with Eris.

No, it was different for me. That was a farce of a walk for my own satisfaction. What Eris and Leo were doing was territorial scouting.

But what do I do now?

I never thought I'd encounter Eris now and here of all places. No, I could probably talk my way past Eris. Like saying we could go visit Lucy together.

"…"

But how would I go about explaining this outfit. She wouldn't immediately try and stab me right? I'm also worried about the kids. Right now, I was doing something I obviously shouldn't. I broke my promise with Sylphy. Should my children be allowed to see this pathetic side of their father?

The answer is no.

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Now that I gave it more thought, it really wouldn't be a good idea. I even went to the trouble of a disguise. I should just go back home. I made it this far through a lapse in judgement, but wouldn't waiting at home with Sylphy and greeting Lucy when she comes back be the better option?

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But I wanted to see Lucy in her hour of triumph. I know it's selfish but it's different from what Sylphy said. I definitely wasn't doing this because I didn't trust Lucy. And it's not so I could help her out from behind the scenes. I promise. I swear to God.

Even if she looked as if she was about to cry, I wouldn't lend a hand. At home, I'd properly hear the story from her and only then would I help her out and instruct her.

Nice one Rudeus buddy. That's the line. That's the line that wouldn't break my promise with Sylphy. Though I had decided on things on my own, without consulting with Sylphy first, but as long as I kept that promise, I wouldn't really be going back on her words. But still, after all of this is over, I'll properly tell her and apologise.

It was actually because I wanted to see Lucy in class that I went to look. I'm sorry, I can't hold myself back. Is that alright? Can I do it? Can she get angry if I am honest?

Alright. Good boy, Rudeus.

"Woof! Woof!"

Ah, in any case, it seemed that Leo had noticed me. His nose was twitching and he was looking in my direction.

"What is it?"

Eris noticed too. It's not like it's a problem if I'm found, but explaining this getup would take a while. Getting held up would also be a pain. Let's take a detour.

"Whoever's hiding there! Come out!"

But it was already too late, I was already found out by Eris. These clothes stood out too much...

Now then, what to do. Do I go out or not? If I do, how do I explain it?

No. But... Yes. There's still quite a distance between us. She shouldn't be able to clearly see me yet.

"…"

I showed myself from the waist up. Eris had her hand on her sword and Leo was wagging his tail. And on top of that, Lara, on top of Leo, and Ars sitting as if hugging her, were also looking at me.

The two of them were looking at me blankly, their gazes pure.

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"Orsted...?"
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Eris looked confused and removed her hand from her sword while I turned around. Nonchalantly.

With movements as if to say that I just coincidently came across you on the roadside, nothing to worry about.

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"...Wait just a minute."
"Tch...!"
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Eris called me to a halt. Was my cover blown? Eris was a Sword King. A warrior who went almost toe to toe with the former Sword God. Looking at my demeanour, you could tell in an instant that I'm not Orsted.

"No, I'm just imagining things. It's fine. Let's go, Leo.

But as soon as I stopped, she said that, turned around and started walking. Leo was glancing in my direction but he didn't chase after me and followed Eris.

The plan was a success.

"…"

My eyes suddenly met with Lara's and Ars' on top of Leo. The dazed Lara and the puzzled Ars. They watched me from Leo's back. As if they were sending me off, I left that place.

Part 2

I arrived at the school. I avoided the front gate, climbed the wall and breached the compound. And then aimed for the classrooms.

I may not have participated in many classes, but I did seriously attend

the school for many years. I did know where the first year classrooms were. I avoided students getting taught in the schoolyard and those walking during the intervals, heading for the first year classrooms.

This place hadn't changed much either. It hadn't even been a decade since I graduated, but it really felt like that. Though the number of unfamiliar students had increased.

It also felt like there had been an increase in Elves, and Beast and Dwarf races since my time as a student. There also seemed to be a large number of Demon races.

I heard from Roxy in the dining room that the main members of the student council were from the Elven race, and the next chief of the Dwarf race, so that seemed to be reason.

It was something that couldn't be seen when Ariel was president.

The amount of other races had increased, but the fact that they were not arrogant anymore was most likely due to the remains of Norn's presidency. Basically she simply did not permit any type of racial discrimination. And that was what caused the current atmosphere of the school.

A small portion of the nobility of the Magic Triumvirate apparently did not approve, but they are like that, proud by nature.

I was walking down the hallway pondering about such things, when suddenly, while I was turning a corner:

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"Uff."
"Ah."
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Almost immediately, someone came from around the corner as well. That person was being followed by five students. No, rather than being followed it was more like being surrounded. When I said being surrounded, it gave off a bad feeling, but it was basically a popular student walking to class with other people. I could see some of the surrounding students holding notebooks, it seemed that there was

something they didn't understand and were asking about it.

It's a very admirable thing to do. Yep, that's right, that person would be able to answer anything. And what came out from that person's mouth would undoubtedly be the truth.

Well, sometimes that person might be wrong, but that mistake also includes the truth.

Those who ask will receive revelation. Liberation.

Let those words resound within you — grasp their meaning, and any may attain strength. Oh students who earnestly accept those words — ponder their meaning and think about how you must live. Oh students, right now, all of you are in bliss.

"...Orsted?"

That person, with suspiciousness lurking beneath those slightly sleepy eyes, looked up at me. Several seconds later, those eyes opened up wide.

"No, Rudy? It's Rudy, isn't is. It's Rudy, right?"

As expected of Roxy. That keen insight of her's wasn't something I could fool.

"...How did you know?"

But I asked nonetheless, because the foolish I couldn't help but seek the truth. Though it was clear to me that it was the wisdom of Roxy. I asked whether she had reached the truth without any real reason.

"It's obvious, the only person with the courage to wear that (Imitate Orsted), would have to be Rudy."

There was a reason. As expected of Roxy!

"Is Orsted-sama aware of this situation?"

"Yes, this was a suggestion from him after all."

"I see... Then that means that there's some reason for it."

Roxy nodded her head and began scrutinising my outfit. I felt like she had some kind of convenient misunderstanding.

"…"

But is that alright? Should I deceive Roxy? Should I lie to Roxy for a momentary period of selfishness? Is that fine? Rudeus, is that fine with you?

"No, there's no important meaning to it."

There's no way that's fine. I cannot lie to Roxy. Lying to Roxy has a different implication than lying to Sylphy or Eris. The thought that lying to Roxy in an important situation is something is wrong, that can't be helped. If I lie here, the next instant, I will come flying in from 20 years in the future and hit myself with a Stone Cannon. Or this very second, I, having lost my identity will suddenly have my limbs melt and turn into an indeterminate existence.

"Then why are you wearing that?"

"Well... I wanted to see Lucy..."

"...Wanted to see? What about your promise with Sylphy?"

"I'm not secretly helping her out or being over protective.

It's just that, I just—I just wanted to see what she was like in class..."

While I flusteredly said that, Roxy silently looked at me, with reproachful eyes. The surrounding students too were perplexed at such a sudden development.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

"...I understand."

But, Roxy relaxed her gaze.

"As long as you honestly watch over her without lending a hand, I'll pretend I didn't see you.

I just saw that Orsted had simply come to the school to inspect it."

"Of course. When I get home, I'm going to apologise to Sylphy too."

I'm pardoned. I am no longer any match for her. From now on, I will bow three times in Roxy's direction, five times a day.

"Well then, I have to teach these children until the next class begins... By the way, do you know where Lucy's classroom is?"

"Yes. Of course."

"Well then."

Roxy said that, gripped my hand once tightly and continued down the hallway. The students saying "Who was that just now!?" followed after her. She's quite popular. It's only natural. She's my teacher after all.

"Alright."

After I had once again fired myself up, I set off down the hallway.

Part 3

I arrived at the classroom. I was peeking into the classroom from the hall, but then I thought that looking from the hall wasn't a very good idea and circled around. If a rumour that Orsted was peeking begins to circulate, our company's reputation would be affected.

While pondering such things, I made a partitioning screen near the window of classroom. Near a window which was not visible from the surroundings...

[&]quot;Sensei...!"

[&]quot;Just this once."

[&]quot;That's for the best."

"...Wait? Couldn't I have just claimed that I was doing a classroom inspection?"

Roxy said I could after all. I felt like I could have gone and gotten permission to watch. If I had explained it to Jinas, he probably would have done something like that.

I messed up.

Well I guess it's fine. As long as I can see Lucy, I'll be satisfied. While thinking that, I activated my clairvoyance and looked inside.

Several desks were lined up in the classroom. Students fit to be called first years were sitting in rows. Most were over 15 year old adults. There were some 10 year old kids too but there was basically nobody as young as 7. There were some kids that looked about 7 but they were mostly from the Dwarf race.

Normal humans, Demon race, Elf race, Dwarfs and Beast races. Peaceful people, arrogant people, kind people, there were plenty of them. Sitting in the back of the classroom was someone who looked like an adventurer, giving off an eerie vibe. Wouldn't getting involved with him get you bullied? No, no matter who they are, they wouldn't pick on a 7 year old child.

But where's Lucy... Aah, there she is, in the front row. As expected of my daughter. Sitting right in the front row full of motivation.

Is what I thought, but it seems her desk was too big. Her desk was so big it's hard to see the front. She's seriously listening to the teacher's words and taking notes, but because of the size of the desk she looks like she's having a hard time. After she gets home, it might be good to let her carry a cushion or something to sit on.

Sitting next to her was a girl of about 10. Most likely a Dwarf. No, from the feeling she gave off, she seemed human. From the way her hair was arranged, most likely a noble. She occasionally talked to Lucy while looking at her own magic textbook. She probably didn't think that taking notes was the norm.

Lucy looked at the girl's magic textbook with a serious face and said something while pointing. Because she was whispering, I couldn't really hear her, but she seemed to be teaching her something. She seems to have already made a friend of a similar age. Have they become friends?

It's still only the first day of class and the teacher didn't seem to have any intention of teaching anything too significant. Looking at the blackboard I could see that they're starting from the basics of the basics. Lucy had already learnt this stuff years ago.

An easy victory.

"Sensei!"

Is what I thought, when Lucy raised her hand.

"Yes?"

"Aggregate magic power isn't decided the moment you're born, it increases when magic is used during childhood. I think what you just said is wrong!"

Compared to what's taught in schools, what Sylphy and Roxy taught her was slightly different. But I feel like it might have been better if she had left it unsaid. Having their own failings pointed out isn't something teachers like very much.

"What's your name?"

"It's Lucy. Lucy Greyrat."

"Greyrat... Which meant you're Roxy-sensei's Daughter?"

"Yes!"

"Right, you must have received a special education since you were young."

The eye's of the teacher shone.

This teacher, I don't want to imagine it, but he isn't about to disrespect Roxy is he?

He wouldn't disrespect a parent in front of their daughter would he? I had decided that I would hold back today, I had decided that, but starting tomorrow, your way to home might become a danger zone, you know?

"It's true that that theory is one explanation. It's true that may have been the case for your father and mother. It could also have been the case for your father's apprentice, Juliet-dono. But whether or not it's reliable has yet to be confirmed. Your father, mother and Juliet-dono may have been special cases. Or it may not apply to Magic and Beast races. It may just be that your father and Roxy are mistaken. There has not been any significant investigation. I will not engage in such research. Therefore, I will teach "Aggregate magic power remains the same throughout one's life." Because that is what I believe."

The teacher spoke in a torrent of words. In order to persuade Lucy, or maybe to persuade himself. Lucy listened to that with a serious face.

"Students, I'd like to hear it from you too. From here on out, you students will study a variety of things. In magic and otherwise. In school and perhaps after graduation, you will study. While you are at this school, we, the pioneers of the art of magic, will teach you all kinds of things. You, as students, may believe in those teaching or not, it is your choice. When things have been proven as wrong, we will admit our mistakes. And if you do prove a mistake in our teachings, it will be you who is teaching us. And if it is what you are saying that is truly correct, we will consent."

Hmmmmm. A way of thinking with high flexibility. It didn't seem like he was a bad teacher.

In fact, he seemed like a good teacher.

"That is all. Lucy, do you have any further questions?"

"None! Thank you very much!"

"Good. Please be seated. I will continue with the class."

The teacher gave a hearty laugh and Lucy sat down. And the applause burst out from the class. Lucy looked backwards surprised, her face became red and she looked down.

It's alright Lucy. You just said something correct. Putting aside whether you're truly correct, those who think you are are giving you applause. So raise your head.

And as I thought that, the girl hesitantly reached out and pet her head and said something.

To which Lucy looked up and gave a big smile.

Hmm, hmm.

Please get along with my daughter. It's ok to fight, just get along with her.

Part 4

After that, I continued to watch Lucy's classes for a while. There were some good and bad teachers. But Lucy didn't hesitate and continued to berate the teachers with questions and doubts. The teachers answered, avoided the questions and occasionally pointed out her mistakes and class continued like that.

Lucy stood out. A seven year old girl wilfully motivated to take class was quite rare. During break, while Lucy was eating her lunch, she was surrounded by quite a crowd, and by evening Lucy was already quite popular.

They were surrounding Lucy and asking her all kinds of questions. About her parents, her family, where she lived and about herself. She was without a doubt popular.

Some among them were probably just trying to butter up to my daughter. But that's fine. You can only meet a person once, the starting point may have been self interest, but there are all kinds of ends. Life is long so it's better to let her seldom associate with bad children.

"Haa."

The last class ended. I was satisfied. I was able to learn Lucy's daily life at school. Of course, I wasn't worried. She was Sylphy's daughter and had been properly taught by her, Eris and Roxy.

There were no worrying factors.

No, well, if I did have a worry, it would be that she was my daughter. Spending everyday in the corner of the classroom with her head down on her desk, was a possibility. No, realistically, that wouldn't have happened. From here on out, there'll probably be plenty of painful things but it'll probably be fine.

After this she'll go to school every day and I'll be content with hearing her stories during dinner each day. While remembering what I saw today I'll be able to eat rice smiling.

I guess I'll go home now. For now, I'll return the cloak and helmet to Orsted.

While thinking that, I removed the mud wall made partitioning screen by rescinding the magic.

"...Ah."

Standing on the other side of the mud wall was a single woman. White hair and a slender body. Pants that looked easy to move in and a sleeveless top. The white arm extending from her shoulder, her hands placed on her hip and a face with a mix of anger and disappointment.

It was Sylphy.

"Ahem... Do you need something?"

I tried my best to mimic Orsted.

"Rudy, what are you doing here?"

Of course, it was futile.

"No, um... Sylphiette-san, what are you doing here?"

"Lara said that she saw her father hiding his face in a weird outfit while she was out for a walk."

"Aah... Indeed."

It was Leo. He betrayed me. He didn't see me, he confirmed it with his nose. Or maybe because Orsted's scent was mixed in, rather than Leo, Lara noticed. Leo and Lara can understand each other after all. No wonder Lara was looking my way.

"...Going as far as to wear that."

Sylphy's shoulders were shaking. She was very angry.

Sylphy gets crazy when she's angry. I can't say specifically how. I can't say it, but whenever she gets angry or is sullen, I'm generally the one in the complete wrong and I'm pierced by reproachful eyes by everyone in the family. Everything becomes very hard. And for at least a week, I'll be spending the night alone.

"Can you really not trust Lucy and I that much."

Tears started flowing from Sylphy's eyes.

Gloomy. This is a gloomy person. A gloomy person, not an angry one. For now, I kneeled in front of her right then and there.

"No, that's not it, it's not like that. I just wanted to watch Lucy in all her glory.

I wanted to see her in class, asking the teachers questions. I wanted to

watch her diligently studying.

You know, cause I haven't really been here very much while she was growing up."

During my flustered explanation, Sylphy looked at me with her tearstained face.

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"Really?"
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"It is. It's just, I couldn't hold back any more, I had intended to tell you after it was over."

"...That's a lie isn't is?"

"It's true. I had intended to apologise to you."

"You wanted to see Lucy in class that much?"

"Yes."

I said that and Sylphy put her hand out and helped me up. She had already stopped crying.

"Then I'm in the wrong here, because even though you only thought about just watching and went so far, I forbade you to even look."
"No, you did nothing wrong. I had agreed to it beforehand after all."
"Yeah... You did."

As we were talking and such, Sylphy's gaze suddenly raised up. The look on her face said she messed up. When I turned around, I understood the reason.

"Aah..."

Before we noticed, the students were already looking at us through the classroom window. And with them, was obviously, Lucy.

Lucy looked at the both of us with a somewhat sullen face.

"Um, today, I made friends with a girl called Belinda-chan."

In the end Sylphy, Lucy and I ended up making up and going home together. Holding Lucy's hands, the three of us were lined up. I thought she would get mad that I came but she wasn't.

One by one, she explained all the fun things that happened today in school.

"You know, Belinda-chan is the daughter of a minister of the Ranoa Kingdom. She's still little, but she's really smart, so that's why she came to school. She says she's going to become the best in the school and make her father notice her."

"Really? That's amazing."

"And guess what, the first class was with Blue-Mama. At first, everyone made fun of her and I almost got mad, but then Blue-Mama, she showed us a little bit of magic and everybody was like "wow". And then Blue-Mama said, "Well, it's up to you whether or not you listen to my class." She was so cool!"

"Why don't you tell that story to Blue-Mama. I'm sure she'll be happy."

The plan was thrown out of whack but that in itself was a good thing. Holding Lucy's hand, walking along with Sylphy. Walking along in a line, blocking the path probably isn't a good thing, but what does it matter. This was my city.

"Did you have fun at school Lucy?"
"Yeah!"

Lucy nodded with extreme happiness. When I saw that I thought that there was nothing to worry about.

"See, Papa. Lucy was fine right?"

As if reading my mind, Lucy said that.

"Yeah, you were just fine. Good girl."

"As expected of Papa's daughter right?"

Lucy was outstanding. No matter how you look at her, she's outstanding. Compared to her father who's not alright at all. A guardian was necessary.

"By the way Rudy."

Suddenly, Sylphy raised a finger.

"Hm?"

"How long are you going to keep wearing that?"

I looked down at myself. A thick white coat and a black helmet. Up until now I've been Fake-Orsted.

"I'll return it tomorrow."

Yeah, right. It won't be a problem tomorrow. I didn't say I'd have it back by the end of the day, and Orsted isn't in any rush. But still, this cloak, the fabric sure was nice. It felt similar to a Red Dragon's pelt, if I asked Aisha, would she know?

"By the way, Lucy."

While I was thinking that, a question came from my mouth. It was a small question, for the sake of confirming something.

"What is it Papa?"

"It's a problem. What's the colour of my hair?"

This questions definitely wasn't because I didn't trust her. It's just to make sure.

[&]quot;Ahaha, way more amazing than Papa.

"Brown!"

"Correct. Lucy's smart. I can expect good things from you in the future. As expected of my daughter."

"Geeze~ Don't make fun of me~"

As I was laughing at the sullen Lucy, I happily walked down the path.

"But Rudy, you broke your promise, so I'll have you bear with it for three days."

"Okay."

I'll have to bear with it for a little while, but I'm happy.

Part 6

The next day.

An odd rumour began circulating around the town. Orsted was aiming for Lucy. It's probably because I was walking around dressed like that. Rumor lasts for only 75 days. I obviously knew that it's groundless, and since Sylphy and the rest of my family knew that too, it was fine.

While thinking that, when I went to Orsted to return the coat, Orsted was glaring at me with a scary face, and I had to come up with an explanation...

But that's a different story.

Orsted's Coat: The material is the pelt of an ancient White Dragon. It carries an absurd amount of magic power, and possesses high physical and magical defence. It possesses self-restoration against ageing and

damage. Because the Ancient White Dragon is now extinct, it's a unique Item

Chapter 6 - Lucy's Family

- Lucy's Perspective -

My name is Lucy Greyrat. I'm the first-born daughter of the Greyrat House.

I have a big family. I have three Mamas, three small sisters, three small brothers, two Grannys, two Aunts and three pets. There are 16 people in total. It's a big family.

Let's start with my Mama. I have three mamas. They are white-haired mama, blue-haired mama and red-haired mama.

White-haired mama is the one who gave birth to me, and the first to become Papa's wife. Papa said that mama is the youngest and the most spoiled. White-haired mama is a talkative person and she always said this:

"It's important to make friends, okay? And you must never bully the weak, okay?"

She kept persuading me that it's important to make friends.

Blue-haired mama is Lara's mama, and the second wife of my Papa. Papa said that she looks small but she's the oldest, and he relies on her the most. Blue-haired mama is quite a reserved person, but she did say that:

"Live however you want, if you don't understand something then just

ask someone."

She never persuaded me about anything, but she knew everything and always answered anything I asked of her.

Red-haired mama is Arus' mother, and the third wife of Papa. Papa said that she looks the oldest but she's actually very immature. Red-haired mama never spoke much but she did say that:

"It's important to protect someone. For that reason you must become strong."

Red-haired mama said that and disciplined me as such.

I think that I have to follow the teachings of my three mamas. I have to make friends, and in order to protect said friends, I have to become stronger. But I must never bully the weak. And if I'm troubled about something then I should ask Blue mama about it. If I do, there won't be any troubles, and I'll be praised as well. Papa too, will praise me saying "You're so smart, Lucy. As expected of the elder sister."

I have 6 siblings in total.

The oldest after me is my younger sister, Lara. She's a very kind kid. Her hair is similar in color to that of Blue mama and her long hair stays in one single braid. She's quite strange too, and is often seen talking with Blond-haired granny and our pet, Beat. Though both Beat and Granny don't talk at all, she's the only one doing the talking.

Since she's like that, staying absentminded most of the time, when she goes out to play, she gets bullied by neighbourhood kids as they try to pull on her braid. Though I immediately go out to help her, she isn't really bothered about it to begin with so it's kind of a let-down. She likes her naps and tends to get on Leo's back to sleep there in peace.

After that is my younger brother, Arus. He's a brave boy. His hair is similar in color to that of Red mama, though it's short, cut and evened up. He's precocious and a naughty kid but he tries to protect me and Lara all the same. I'm sure that he's trying to do the same thing as me, trying to follow her mama's teachings. Red mama expects a lot from him, as such he's been running and practise-swinging the sword almost everyday. He's close with Aunt Aisha and always looks delightful whenever he's near her.

Then comes the youngest brother in my family, Sieg. In simple words, he's a crybaby. He totters behind Arus and starts crying if he's left behind too much. At that time, I scold Arus. In doing so, Arus takes Sieg's hand and the two of them get up on Leo's back. When Sieg tries to climb on Leo, Lara moves back a bit and let's him take the forward. And then, hugs Sieg tightly from behind so that he doesn't fall off and ends up falling asleep peacefully. Actually, I know one trait of Sieg that no one knows yet, he's actually very strong. He can pick up really heavy boxes with much ease.

I do have one more younger brother, namely Clive. He's the same age as Arus, though he's not my real brother. He's the child of White-haired mama's granny's. According to mama, he's someone like a cousin to me or so it seems. I don't know why he's called as such but I deal with him as my younger brother anyway. He seems to have a good relationship with Arus, whenever he drops by for a visit he talks with him the most. It seems he likes me quite a bit, he clings to me a lot and whenever I pat his head, he smiles shyly.

My youngest sisters have just been born so I don't know much about them as they are still very small. But I'm sure they will turn out as good girls in the future. I'm the older sister of all these little brothers and sisters of mine. Since I'm the oldest so I must act properly, or so I've heard a countless times from my mamas. I think that I'm doing just as I'm told. My little sisters and brothers are all cute too, so I do want to protect them.

I also have two Grannies.

The Blond-haired granny is Papa's mother. Her name is Zenith-san. She was a really lovely person once but now she can't talk, even having a conversation with her yields no reply from her. She always looks absentminded and is seen together with Beat in the garden a lot. However, when I feel sorry or get angry, she caress my head for some reason. She's a very mysterious granny.

The Brown-haired granny is Aunt Aisha's mother. Her name is Lilya-san. It seems that she was brought along to serve Grandpa's house as a maid at first, but acts just like how a maid would upto this day. The three mamas are very grateful and tip their hats off to this granny, but for some reason, in the past I wasn't sure just why she was my granny. Once, when I was walking in town, I heard someone saying "A maid is someone from the lower classes, someone to push around for work.". And when I tried saying that back at home, Red-haired mama got really angry and I got scolded. She slapped my butt until it got completely red and told me to reflect upon what I said by throwing me out the house for the night. When I was shivering, huddled together with Leo, Brownhaired granny was the one who let me inside the house. At that time, granny told me what actually happened. And then, I learned on that day that even though she's a maid, she's still my granny and she shouldn't be pushed around to work.

I also have two Aunts.

Both of them are still quite young, and when I call them aunts they get angry, but an aunt is an aunt. Although to me, they are like elder sisters.

The older aunt is the daughter of the Blond-haired granny, and the younger sister of Papa. Her name is Norn-san. She's a person who always works hard, plays with me a lot, and told me a lot of things. I like this aunt the most. I wish to become someone like her in the future. Though she got married not long ago and has already left the house. She rarely visits and even when she does, she gets into argument with the younger aunt. It looks like they are on bad terms but they can be seen laughing while quarreling often, and there are also times when they look like they are having fun.

The younger aunt is the daughter of Brown-haired granny, and Papa's half younger sister. Her name is Aisha-san. Similar to Brown-haired granny, she always wears maid clothings and manages most of the housework. Whenever I need help with something in this house, she's the one who helps me most of the time. She has basically taught me cooking, laundry and anything that's house related. Mama said that aunt Aisha can pretty much do anything and she's very good at what she does. It seems she also helps out with Papa's work. And yet, she gets scolded by Brown-haired granny from time to time. It's a mystery.

We have three pets.

The big white dog, Leo, is a Sacred Beast. He is very smart and understands what we say to him. It feels like he's watching over us all, Papa said to rely on him if anything bad ever happens. His favourite is Lara, and sticks to her most of the time inside the house.

Armadillo Jiro is Blue-mama's vehicle. He has a timid personality, when scolded he immediately shows his stomach or rolls up into a ball. But if something happens when we're leaving, he growls to intimidate anyone. He too, in his own way, tries to protect us.

Treant Beat is the watchful protector of aunt Aisha's vegetable garden. Since it is a plant monster, I really don't know what he's thinking but he's often seen together with Blond-haired granny and Lara. He's ruthless towards anyone who may lay waste to the crops in garden. It's not a rare sight that we get to see it catch small birds which try to eat the seeds of Papa's favourite Rice, those birds in the end become it's nutrients. It's a little scary, but it never attacks family members. On the contrary, when we approach it, it let's us have a fruit. It is too, a family.

16 people. I have a lot of members in my family. I have lots of mama, and younger brother and younger sisters.

But Papa is alone. He's the only one alone.

I love Papa a lot. It seems like I tended to avoid him since I was a small child. Papa's odour gives me a peace of mind. Sometimes his beard scrapes me a bit, but I like that too. Papa doesn't let me touch his beard much. When it gets a bit muzzy, and I try to touch it, he grabs my hand and says "Sorry, I'll just go and shave it now." and leaves for the bathroom. Though I think it's fine, but Papa may think something otherwise. It's a pity that he doesn't let me touch his beard much, but I don't dislike that part of him at all.

But, it's just that... I think Papa doesn't really expect much from me. I sort of think that way. He cares for me, even loves me a lot, but I think that he doesn't expect much from me.

Surely, it's because Papa is an amazing person. Yep, that's right. I don't know much but I can somehow understand that Papa is an amazing person. When Papa was as old as me, he could already use Saint Class magic, and far from attending school, he was already at a position where he could teach. When he was 5, he went around playing in town or park, greeted everyone that he met, but all of those people know about Papa and respect him quite a bit. Even the most conceited ones end up praising my Papa.

I know that my Mamas are amazing as well, but I knew since childhood that Papa is a special case. That Papa of mine, not expecting much from me... no, from us is understandable, I think it can't be helped.

But I want Papa to praise me. I will abide by what my mamas has taught me, and I'll protect my siblings as well. In doing so, I will receive a lot of praise from my mamas. But I want Papa to praise me too.

I'm already 7 years old. I'll be attending school from today onwards. A school where adults attend as well, the school where Papa, Blue-mama and White-mama attended. Red-mama never attended this school, but I've heard that she teaches Swordplay from time to time.

"If it's you, it's going to be fine. You'll be just fine if you properly follow what we have taught you" or so Blue-mama had told me but I'm still a bit nervous. A place where adults are in majority. I'm worried whether I'll be able to make friends there, whether I'll be able to do my best. I have some hopes as well but my anxiety is greater.

But I think if I worked hard there, I will be praised by my Papa. "Lucy is amazing. As expected of my daughter." or so I think I'll be praised like that. And then, surely my hopes will be reached as well.

That is why, I'll work hard in order to achieve that goal.